

PEOPLE

Reminder to all staff . . . farewell to Dr. Bowman

Join Dr. Bowman in celebrating his retirement – Tuesday, May 28 at 3:30 p.m. in the west atrium, Mill Woods.

Clover Bar staff say good-bye

Artists from Clover Bar, affectionately named the Group of Seven – Plus One, presented retiring president, **Dr. Clem Bowman**, with an original stained glass creation on behalf of all staff at the Oil Sands and Hydrocarbon Recovery Department. The informal ceremony over coffee and donuts took place April 11, at the northeast Edmonton site.

To qualify for the gift, Dr. Bowman's art appreciation level was tested. Emcee **Dr. Duke du Plessis** asked, "Name the subject in this particular work of art?" In record time, and true Jeopardy game show fashion, Dr. Bowman replied, "What is a polar bear?", and was awarded a bonus of two extra jelly donuts. □



Clover Bar artists, pictured left to right with Dr. Bowman: Naomi Moor, Deb Henry, Shelley Lorimer, Lina Klein, Janet Hay, and Kirk Green. Kathy Pongar and Bernice Young were unavailable for the photo.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Distinguished panel to address issues in science education

How does Canada rank worldwide in science education initiatives?

What can Canada do to attract more students to train for careers in science and technology?

How can Canadian students improve their science and math scores?

These questions will be addressed by **Dr. Graham Orpwood**, program director in Science Education, New York University; **Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour**, assistant chair of the Department of Chemistry, University of Alberta; **Jack Cressey**, president and CEO of Monenco Limited and Majestic Contractors Limited; and **Dr. Marlene Jones**, senior scientist, Advanced Computing and Engineering Department, Alberta Research Council.

The panel discussion will take place in the Mill Woods auditorium on Wednesday, May 29 at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend. □

AT A GLANCE

- ★ Apple versus Cherry
- ★ Dr. Bowman's farewell
- ★ Final Grantland comic
- ★ Employees on the move
- ★ New staff orientations
- ★ Health & Safety update

Newsline is a monthly publication for the employees of the Alberta Research Council.

Please send all submissions and direct all questions to John Barry, Acting Editor
Alberta Research Council
PO Box 8330, Postal Station F
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5X2

**ALBERTA
RESEARCH
COUNCIL**

70 Years of R&D

1921-1991

New employees evaluate staff orientation program

Between January and October 1990, the Human Resources Department conducted five orientation sessions for new staff. Staff Development Coordinator **Wolf Gut** surveyed participants and received valuable feedback on the Alberta Research Council's new employee orientation program.

"More than 50 new employees have participated so far, providing a wide range of interesting comments. The general consensus is that the orientation sessions were worthwhile, but they would be most effective if provided within the first two months of employment, rather than after three months. We took this advice and implemented the change."

Since January, 1990, new employees have been introduced to the Research Council in a three-stage orientation process. In the first stage, Human Resources familiarizes new employees with general information, including benefits, payroll and employee policies. During this stage they also receive basic Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS) and safety training.

The second stage introduces new staff to their immediate work environment, responsibilities and fellow employees.

In the third stage, Wolf gives participants an opportunity to gain a more in-depth understanding of the Research Council as an organization, its mission,

values and staff policies.

In addition to helping staff get to know the organization better, the organization benefits by hearing from new staff about their initial experiences. This is important knowledge to have, says Wolf, "as research has shown that the first three months are vital in establishing employees' attitudes about the organization. These initial attitudes can be hard to change once formed."

Upon completing the orientation sessions, new staff are encouraged to answer a questionnaire, providing input and suggestions as to how the process can be improved for future employees.

When asked, "**What has been your most positive experience or impression of the Alberta Research Council to date?**" staff comments included the following:

- *The assistance from other staff and being commended for a job well-done.*
- *The professionalism shown here at the Research Council.*
- *To see the president in the cafeteria line-up, attending events and taking the time to show his interest.*
- *Being able to connect a 'lost' inventor with a company that may help him.*
- *The Research Council is making a difference for the future of the environment and our resources.*

"How can the Alberta Research Council improve the methods used to orient new employees?"

- *Name tags are great, but it would be helpful to also have the person's title and department on them.*
- *Explain the objectives/policies in the salary/promotion area in the first week. This was a gray area for months.*
- *Assistance in learning required computer systems (mail, word processing) and filling out employee forms.*
- *A general tour of the facility.*
- *A contact list for 'specific needs'.*

If you would like to share your experiences as a new employee, Wolf would be glad to hear from you. The next orientation session is scheduled for June. If you have not attended an orientation session but would like to, please call **Barb Turner** at 450-5142 to register. □

ON THE MOVE

Employee changes

We welcome to the Alberta Research Council: **Gable Chau**, Advanced Computing and Engineering; **Kelly Cymbala**, Oil Sands and Hydrocarbon Recovery; **Jack Wilkinson**, Advanced Computing and Engineering.

We wish the following well in their future endeavors: **Joan Checholik**, Office of the Vice-President, Resource Technologies; **Lynda O'Carroll**, Biotechnology; **Aldo Opel**, Manufacturing Technologies; **Karin Tremaine**, Environmental Research and Engineering.

FEEDBACK

A slim, trim annual report

Some expressions of dismay have reached Corporate Communications over the size and appearance of the new annual report. Therefore, a word of explanation: the decision was taken to scale back from last year's glossy production as a restraint measure, thereby allowing us to produce other needed publications to better target our audiences.

The corporate plan, A Vision to the Year 2000, is one of the major documents for 1991. In addition, we are replacing our

out-of-date corporate brochure. The annual report just issued, which covers our legal requirements, the new corporate brochure now in production, and the corporate plan are designed as a "package" to complement each other.

As to the design of the annual report, you have not disappointed us! Reviews are mixed, but that has been our experience every year.

Dorothy Hollands, director, Corporate Affairs □

Congratulations ...

Dorothy Hollands, appointed director, Corporate Affairs. Dorothy now has added responsibility for science awareness activities and programs.

Daryl Wightman, Alberta Geological Survey, appointed to manager, Oil Sands Group. □

Point 9 of corporate safety policy explained

Safety is the number one priority of the Research Council. **Newsline** continues its outline of corporate safety requirements, this month featuring point nine.

9. Personal wear must be appropriate to the task and work environment

Policy detail

According to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, "an employer shall take reasonable measures to institute engineering techniques, systems, work practices or administrative controls that eliminate or reduce to a practical minimum those hazards for which personal protective equipment is or would otherwise be required."

Appropriate personal wear means wardrobe, which is standard with safe work procedure, hygiene assessment, hazard analysis and legislative requirements such as the Canadian Standards Association.

An employer shall ensure workers use the appropriate personal protective equipment specified in the regulation and workers shall use that equipment. Department heads are responsible for ensuring personal safety wear is available and accessible for the department. A safe work procedure must be written for each hazard-

ous operation, indicating the personal protective wear required.

Personal protective equipment provided by Administrative Services, Stores, includes; non-prescription safety glasses, hearing protection, respirators, hard hats, face shields, aprons, gloves, lab/plant wear and disposable coveralls.

Supervisors must ensure personal protective equipment is in a condition to perform the function for which it was designed.

It is the responsibility of the department to supply and pay for safety shoes and field wear.

The prescription safety glasses program is administered by the Occupational Health Unit. Staff requiring information should call 450-5051. Contact lenses are not allowed in any lab; exemptions to this rule must be approved by the corporate physician.

The June issue of **Newsline** will salute Alberta Safety Week, June 17-21. If you have questions regarding the Alberta Research Council's safety program, contact **Janis Koehler**, manager, Occupational Health, Safety and Hygiene, 450-5053. □

Safety incident of interest

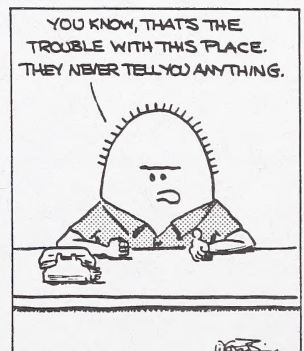
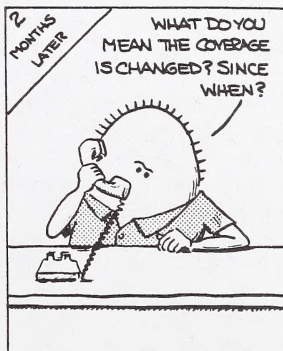
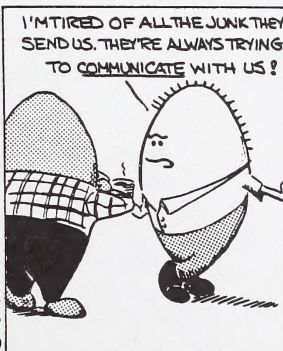
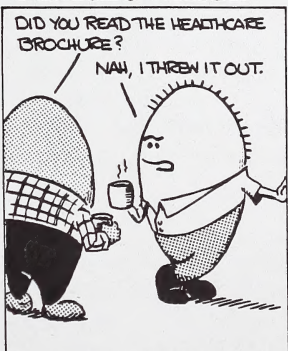
The Alberta Research Council recently violated Transportation of Dangerous Goods Legislation, when two packages containing Class 3 flammable liquid containers were shipped, through Air Canada, as undeclared dangerous goods.

Airport inspectors seized the packages when it was found they did not comply with all the prescribed safety requirements related to documentation, packaging, markings and labelling; contrary to the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, Section 4.

Transport Canada has issued a warning to the Alberta Research Council, indicating "STRICT ENFORCEMENT OF THE DANGEROUS GOODS ACT WILL OCCUR IN ANY FUTURE INCIDENTS OF THIS NATURE".

Occupational Health, Safety and Hygiene and the department in question have completed an investigation into this incident. A written procedure has since been issued to all staff regarding the shipment of hazardous materials. The department has also designated people to handle all shipments of dangerous goods. □

GRANTLAND®



Apple versus Cherry

If you were one of thousands across Canada, tuned in to CBC TV's Stanley Cup hockey playoff preview April 2, you may have encountered an unusual marriage of minds.

The quiet, analytical demeanor of an Alberta Research Council Apple Macintosh computer went head to head with hockey's loudest, brashest spokesperson, **Don Cherry**.

The bizarre pairing stemmed from a March 5 article in *The Globe and Mail* which featured the Research Council's capabilities in advanced computing and artificial intelligence. CBC TV Network Sports picked up on the idea and challenged the Research Council to outwit Don Cherry and predict the results of the 1991 National Hockey League (NHL) playoffs.

First impressions of the ambitious project had many people wondering, "What is the value of having the Alberta Research Council on Hockey Night in Canada?"

Roy Masrani of Advanced Computing and Engineering, who, along with **Chris Lumb** negotiated the deal, explains the objective of the project.

"The CBC contract provided us with an ideal opportunity to develop new approaches and techniques which we will use in practical applications for business. For example, this approach can be used to predict failures in complex machinery by looking for trends in the sensor data."

Lynn Sutherland headed up the project team in Calgary with the assistance of **Brian Schack** and the National Research Council's **Russ Thomas**. The predictions, based on data supplied by NHL statisticians, were made using statistical analysis and artificial intelligence techniques. One of the techniques used is a neural network, a new kind of computer program that discovers relationships in information. Based on data provided for each team, the computer discovered if there was a relationship between that information and whether or not the team would win.

For those of you who follow hockey, you know that predicting hockey scores is not an exact science. Neither human nor



CBC/NHL playoff predictions team: From left to right: Roy Masrani, Russ Thomas (NRC), Chris Lumb, Brian Schack, with Lynn Sutherland seated.

machine can account for the unknown - injuries, winning streaks, morale or coaching problems.

To drive home the point, the Stanley Cup champions predicted by both the computer and Cherry were defeated in the first round. However, the computer correctly picked five out of eight opening round series.

The Alberta Research Council is certainly a winner, gaining invaluable publicity on a national level from all types of media and promoting an awareness of science and technology to an interested public. □

**contributed by Ena E. Spalding,
Corporate Communications**

STAFF NOTES

AOSTRA/ARC/Industry Research Program - The Annual Technical Seminar will be held May 9 at the Energy Resources Conservation Board, Govier Hall, Calgary. The 1990/91 program was supported by \$3 million, funded by AOSTRA, the Research Council and 10 industrial members. Over the next five years, the program budget is expected to increase to \$4 million with six new industrial partners and financial support from CANMET. Call **Dr. Eddy Isaacs**, 472-4400 for information.

★ ★ ★

Environmental Research and Engineering - The department will host a civil engineering student from Swaziland, May 6-10, under the supervision of **Gordon Jean**. The student plans to return to his country May 25 and set up a hydrogeological program after gathering information in an exchange with the Research Council,

N.A.I.T., Alberta Environment and a private consulting firm.

★ ★ ★

ISCORD '91 - The International Symposium on Cold Region Development takes place at the Edmonton Convention Centre, June 16-21. Several staff are helping to coordinate this year's show, which features the latest technology for cold climate development. **Dr. Jan Boon** is show chairman; **Dr. Brian Hitchon** is program chairman; **Rick Richardson** is treasurer; and **Kathie Skogg** is secretary to the show chairman.

★ ★ ★

Make yourself count on June 4 - Remember to fill out and mail in your 1991 census questionnaire. Forms will be delivered to households in late May. On June 4, take a few minutes of your time and 'count yourself in'. □

